

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with James C. Wray on December 22, 2008.

The application has been amended as follows:

In the specification, on page 1, in line 2, deleted "Scope of the invention" and replaced with --BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION--.

In the specification, on page 1, in line 8, deleted "Background of the invention".

In the specification, on page 2, in line 16, deleted "Object of the invention".

In the specification, on page 2, in line 31, deleted "Summary of the invention" and replaced with --BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION--.

In the specification, on page 7, in line 8, deleted "Brief description of the drawings" and replaced with --BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS--.

In the specification, on page 9, in line 7, deleted "Detailed description of the drawing" and replaced with --DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION--.

In claim 2, in line 4, before "pivotal gate" inserted --recess in said--.

In claim 3, in line 4, after "arranging at" deleted "end parts of a" and replaced with
--an end part of a respective--.

In claim 3, in line 4, after "arranged on" inserted --said--.

In claim 3, in line 5, before "aligned position" inserted --an--.

In claim 3, in line 6, after "(23) comprises" deleted "a" and replaced with --an
axially protruding--.

In claim 3, in line 7, after "end part (214)" deleted "adapted to engage with" and
replaced with --comprising an axially forwardly open recess adapted to
receive--.

In claim 3, in line 8, after "part (3)" deleted "and" and replaced with --when in said
aligned position and an opposite end of--.

In claim 3, in line 8, after "adapted to" inserted --retractably--.

In claim 3, in line 9, after "coupling part, and" inserted --when said coupling
system is activated into a locked position--.

In claim 3, in line 10, after "are activated" deleted "by displacing" and replaced
with --to axially retract--.

In claim 3, in line 10, after "member (21)" inserted --within said first coupling part
gate member and lockably retain said pin within said recess in said locking
bolt member--.

In claim 3, in line 12, after "comprises a" inserted --pivotally mounted--.

In claim 3, in line 14, after "pressing against" deleted "it" and replaced with --the
ball bearing on said opposite key palate member--.

In claim 3, in lines 14-16, after "coupling parts are" deleted "aligned, wherein each key plate... gate members and locks" and replaced with --in said aligned position, thereby activating said key plate members from a spring loaded position, pivoting each key plate member into a locked position such that said first coupling part plate member pivots to axially retract the locking bolt member, locking said pin in said recess in said locking bolt member and locking--.

In claim 8, in lines 2-4, after "characterized in that" deleted "said tapered end part... second coupling part (3) and".

In claim 8, in line 4, after "open recess (215)" deleted "having" and replaced with --has--.

In claim 9, in line 3, before "bolt member" inserted --locking--.

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

As to claim 3, Yoshinaga (JP 11-60150) discloses the claimed interlocking coupling system with the exception of an opposite end of the locking bolt member being adapted to retractably engage with a recess in the pivotal gate member of the first coupling part, and when the coupling system is activated into a locked position both the gate members are activated to axially retract the locking bolt member within the first coupling part gate member and lockably retain the pin within the recess in the locking bolt member, wherein each of the coupling parts comprises a pivotally mounted spring loaded key plate member with at least one ball bearing adapted to engage with the key

plate member on the opposite coupling part by pressing against the ball bearing on the opposite key plate member when the coupling parts are in the aligned position, thereby activating the key plate members from a spring loaded position, pivoting each key plate member into a locked position such that the first coupling part plate member pivots to axially retract the locking bolt member, locking the pin in the recess in the locking bolt member and locking the coupling parts together.

There is no teaching or suggestion, absent the applicants' own disclosure, for one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the coupling system disclosed by Yoshinaga to have the above mentioned elemental features. Furthermore, such modifications would yield unexpected and unpredictable results.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MICHAEL P. FERGUSON whose telephone number is (571)272-7081. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (6:30am-3:00pm).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel P. Stodola can be reached on (571)272-7087. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

MPF
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/Michael P. Ferguson/
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